YOUR HOME NORTHAMPTON
USER GUIDE

NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Contents

Welcome to Your Home Northampton 3

Priority Bands 4

- Emergency Band 4
- Band A – Urgent Need 5
- Band A – Urgent Need Continued 6
- Band B – Moderate Need 6
- Reduced Priority Band 6

Property Size Table 7

Bidding Cycles 8

Property Adverts And Symbols 9

Bidding on the Internet 11

- Step 1 – Signing Up 11
- Step 2 – Logging In 14
- Step 3 – Bidding For A Property 15
- Making Further Bids 17
- My Details 18
- Searching For Properties 19
- Recent Lets 20

Frequently Asked Questions 21

Our Housing Association Partners 26

Translations 27

Welcome to Your Home Northampton

Choice Based Lettings is the way that Northampton Borough Council let council, housing association, and private landlord properties to customers on the housing register. It allows you to choose where you want to live in Northampton by selecting the properties that you are interested in from the selection that you qualify for.

The letter that was sent to you when you were accepted onto the housing register advised you of your housing reference number, the priority band that you have been allocated, and the size properties that you will be eligible to be considered for. **If you have been placed into Band B, we would strongly recommend that you consider other housing options as the demand for accommodation is extremely high and we cannot guarantee that every applicant who is accepted onto the housing register will be offered a property**

Priority Bands

Emergency Band

Applicants who have a statutory right of succession and wish to succeed to a Northampton Borough Council or Housing Association property, but that property is not suitable for your household type due to under-occupation, or being designated as sheltered housing and/or having been adapted and you do not qualify for an adapted property.
Applicants whom the Council have accepted as being eligible as homeless and in priority need (except those found to be intentionally homeless)
Tenants who have to vacate their homes within six weeks due to a Compulsory Purchase Order or Northampton Borough Council Tenants who have to move, as their home requires major works within six weeks. This will be determined and managed subject to the Council's decant procedure
Applicants who are under-occupying a Northampton Borough Council or Housing Association partner's property. The Under-occupation scheme will be important in light of the measures in the Welfare Reform Act 2012, which will reduce Housing Benefit entitlement for work age social tenants who under-occupy their property (measured in accordance with the Local Housing Allowance size criteria)
Applicants who are statutorily overcrowded as defined by Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985
Emergency Landlord Request Transfer as defined by section 5.11 of this Housing Allocations scheme
Hospital discharge customers, who have somewhere to live on leaving hospital but it is unsuitable for their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations due to cost, structural difficulties, or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time, or such customers who have nowhere at all to live when they leave hospital
Applicants who are being discharged from the Armed Forces who have sustained serious injury, illness, medical condition, or disability during service which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service. It will also cover serving former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.

Band A – Urgent Need

Applicants who have a severe medical, welfare award or disability (including learning disability) where the current accommodation is unsuitable or it is unreasonable to remain in occupation.
Applicants who have priority on welfare grounds and require to move urgently because of a risk to their well-being or health. This would include a person who needs to move to a different locality in order to give or receive care, to access specialised medical treatment, or to take up a particular employment, education or training opportunity.
Applicants who permanently lack one or all of these essential facilities – hot water, heating, a kitchen, internal toilet and bathroom
Private sector tenants who are required to vacate their home as a result of enforcement action by the Local Authority
Applicants who are in priority need who have been issued with a legal notice that the landlord requires possession, which has less than eight weeks to run. This banding will remain for a further 6 weeks after the end of notice before being subject to a statutory review
Applicants who are occupying Partnership Agency accommodation and who have an agreed move on
Applicants who no longer require the adaptations in their current home. Customers who release an adapted property where the tenant does not require their current home and will therefore be releasing an adapted property by moving
Applicants who are part of a multi-agency public protection agreement. (MAPPA)
Serious threat to the well-being of a child and their accommodation is a contributory factor to the risk. These are cases where an emergency move is required to mitigate the risk to the child as confirmed by Northamptonshire County Council's Director of Adult and Children's services
Applicants who have an agreed fostering or adoption agreement in place with Northamptonshire County Council, who need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child It will also include special guardians, holders of a residence order and family and friend carers who are not foster carers but who have taken on the care of a child because the parents are unable to provide care.

Band A – Urgent Need Continued

Applicants who could not be expected to find their own accommodation, such as young adults with learning disabilities who wish to leave the family home so that they can live independently within the community
Applicants who are being discharged from the Armed Forces bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

Band B – Moderate Need

Applicants who are owed a duty under the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 and Northampton Borough Council service tenants who are due to retire or have their contract of employment terminated.
Applicants who are sharing facilities (bathroom, kitchen etc), with a separate family household.
Applicants who require a move for moderate medical or welfare grounds where there is an acknowledgement that alternative accommodation would be beneficial but is not essential.
Applicants who are not in priority need and have received a Notice to Quit, this includes private rented tenants, tied tenants, or lodgers

Reduced Priority Band

Applicants with the following circumstances will be placed into this:
Rent arrears, or other related housing debt to the council, from any applicant who applies, including joint applicants/family members
Deliberately worsening housing circumstances to achieve higher priority
Non-compliance with tenancy agreement, or other unacceptable behaviour, including committing or allowing to be committed acts of antisocial behaviour and damage to council property
Income or capital above the thresholds
Property not meeting the repair void standard required for a transfer applicant, including the state of cleanliness, or decoration
Refusal of 3 reasonable offers within a 12 month period

Property Size Table

The following table shows the type of properties that you will be eligible to bid for. This is in line with Housing Benefit eligibility rules:

Household Makeup	Bedroom Assessment
Single person	Bedsit or 1 bedroom flat1 bedroom flat
Couples, and applicants who are pregnant (includes applicants who are pregnant and sharing with family)	1 bedroom flat
Single pensioners or applicants who require ground floor accommodation	1 bedroom flat or bungalow
Pensioner couples above the Pension Credit Age who require ground floor accommodation due to supported and proven medical reasons	1/2 bedroom flat or bungalow
1 child families	2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
2 child families of same sex or opposite sex if child under 10 years of age	2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Families with 2 children of same sex under 16	2 Bedroom flat, maisonette or house
2 child families with children of opposite sex and over the age of 10	3 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
3 child families	3 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
4 child families depending on family make up	3 bedroom flat, maisonette, or house, or 4 bedroom house
Families with more than 5 children	4, 5, or 6 bedroom houses

Children are defined as anyone under 16. Households with children under 16 can bid on flats located on any floor level of a block of flats. Applicants with children over this age will only be considered for flats or maisonettes

Bidding Cycles

Properties are advertised weekly from a minute past midnight every Wednesday until 11.59 pm the following Tuesday on the internet, in Your Home magazine, and in the One Stop Shop.

Applicants in the Emergency Band are limited to bidding for a period of 6 bidding periods or cycles (6 weeks). During this time they will be expected to bid for suitable properties in the area of their choice. If you have not been allocated a property within this period, you may receive a direct offer of a suitable property within the borough and this may be a property owned by a private landlord

If the offer of accommodation is deemed to be suitable and reasonably meets your needs, the right to refuse this offer will be subject to a statutory review. If the statutory review identifies that the property was not suitable, a further direct offer of suitable alternative accommodation will be made to you within 7 days of the outcome of the statutory review. This may be a property owned by a private landlord.

Applicants who are under-occupying their current homes will have an unlimited time period to place bids in order to find alternative accommodation, but direct offers may be considered.

If you have been placed in band B, we advise you to consider other housing options, including private renting, low cost home ownership, or mutual exchanges. If you are unable to place bids yourself, assistance is available by calling 01604 837942, 01604 837071, 0300 330 7000, or emailing yourhome@northampton.gov.uk We welcome calls via the Text Relay Service.

Property Adverts And Symbols

Adverts will include a photograph of the property that is available, or a similar property in the same street . The house number of the property will, however, not appear in the advert. Symbols are used to explain the facilities that each property has. These are explained in the table below:

Type of property	 Bedsit Flat House Maisonette Bungalow Sheltered housing
Number of bedrooms	 1 bedroom 2 bedrooms 3 bedrooms 4 bedrooms 5 bedrooms 6 bedrooms
Floor Level	 Basement Ground floor 1st floor 2nd floor 3rd floor 4th floor 5th floor 6th floor 7th floor 8th floor 9th floor 10th floor, or above
Lift details	 Lift in block No lift in block
Maximum number of people allowed to live in the property	 Single person 2 people 3 people 4 people 5 people 6 people 7 people 8 people
Age restrictions	 No children under 10 No children under 12 No children under 14 No children under 16 Over 18s only Over 25s only Over 40s only Over 50s only Over 55s only Over 60s only

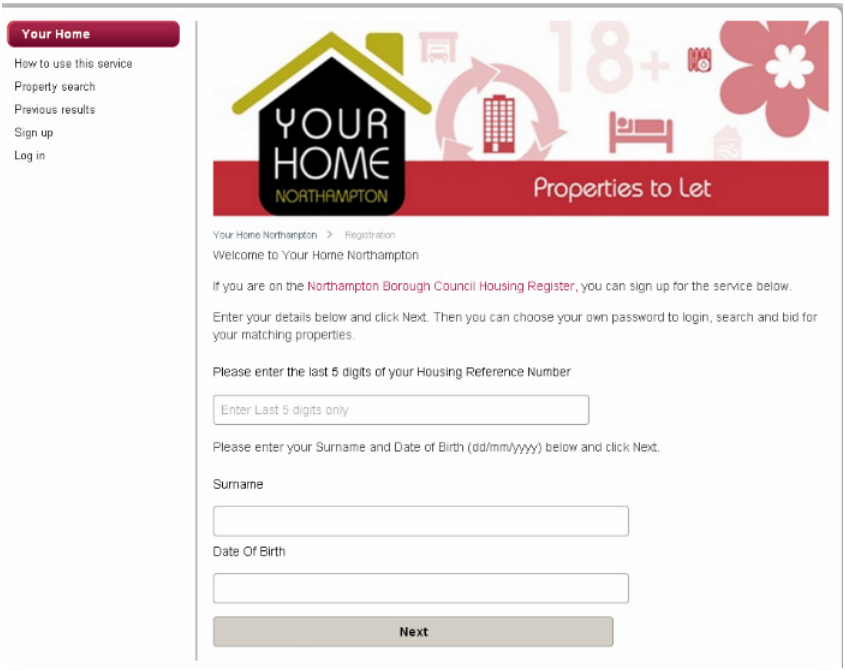
Type of heating	Central heating Warm air heating
Mobility level	**Mobility 1** – wheelchair access **Mobility 2** – partial access **Mobility 3** – assisted access
Type of garden	Private garden Communal garden
Pet restrictions	No dogs allowed Dogs allowed
Parking facilities	Parking space On street parking Garage
Energy efficiency rating	A rating B rating C rating D rating E rating F rating G rating
Method of moving Applies to council and housing association tenants only	Mutual Exchange

Bidding on the Internet

Step 1 – Signing Up

If you are not on our housing register but would like to find out if you qualify, click on Northampton Borough Council Housing Register and you will be taken to the relevant page on our website to apply

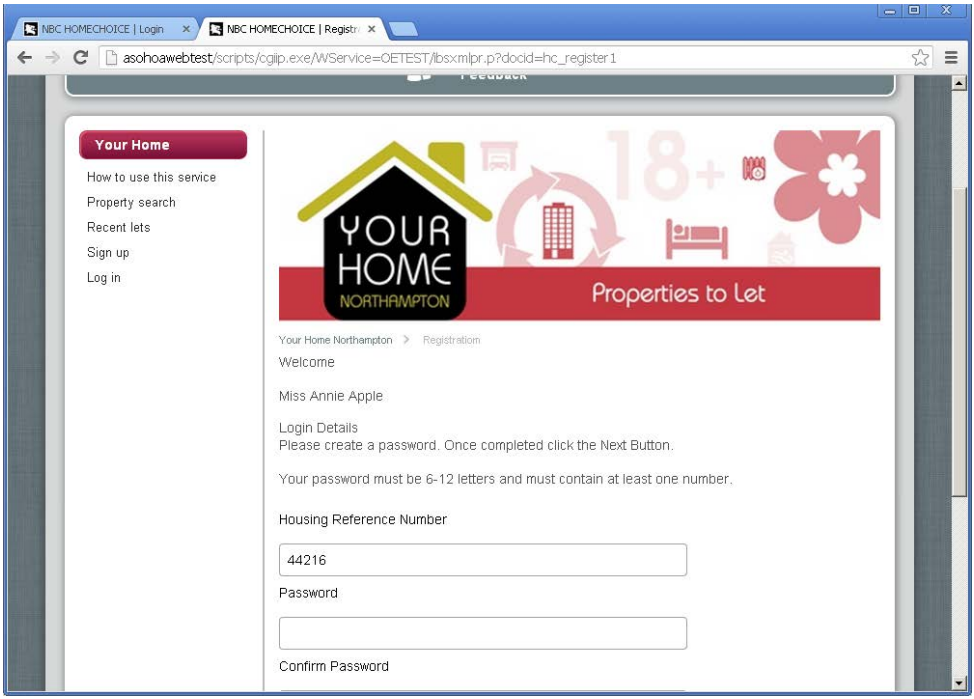
If you have already been accepted onto the housing register go to www.yourhomenorthampton.co.uk and select Sign Up. The following page will be displayed:


Your Home
How to use this service
Property search
Previous results
Sign up
Log in
YOUR HOME NORTHAMPTON
Properties to Let
Your Home Northampton > Registration
Welcome to Your Home Northampton
If you are on the Northampton Borough Council Housing Register, you can sign up for the service below.
Enter your details below and click Next. Then you can choose your own password to login, search and bid for your matching properties.
Please enter the last 5 digits of your Housing Reference Number
Enter Last 5 digits only
Please enter your Surname and Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) below and click Next.
Surname
Date Of Birth
Next

Enter the last 5 digits of your housing reference number, then your surname, and date of birth in the relevant fields. You can either use the calendar that pops up to enter your date of birth, or add it manually. If you add it manually, you will need to place a forward slash after the date and month, and enter the full year that you were born. Alternatively, if you select the Date of Birth field, a calendar will appear. Select the month that you were born, the year that you were born, followed by the day, then select

NEXT

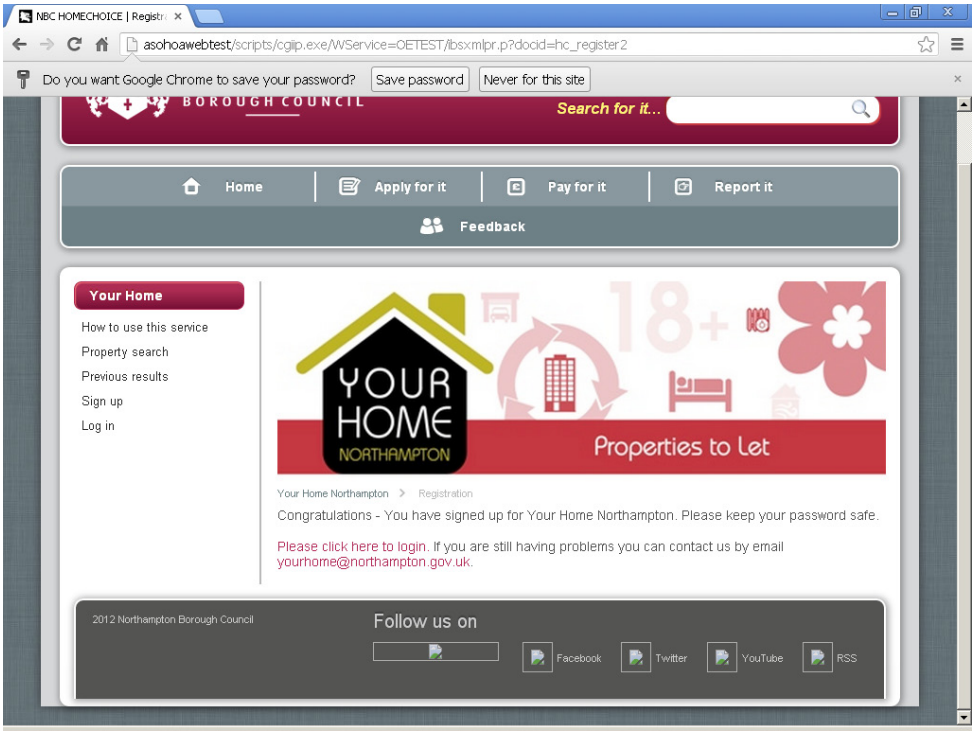
The following page will then be displayed:



You will now need to create a password which should contain between six to twelve letters and at least one number. Enter your password again in the Confirm Password field, then select

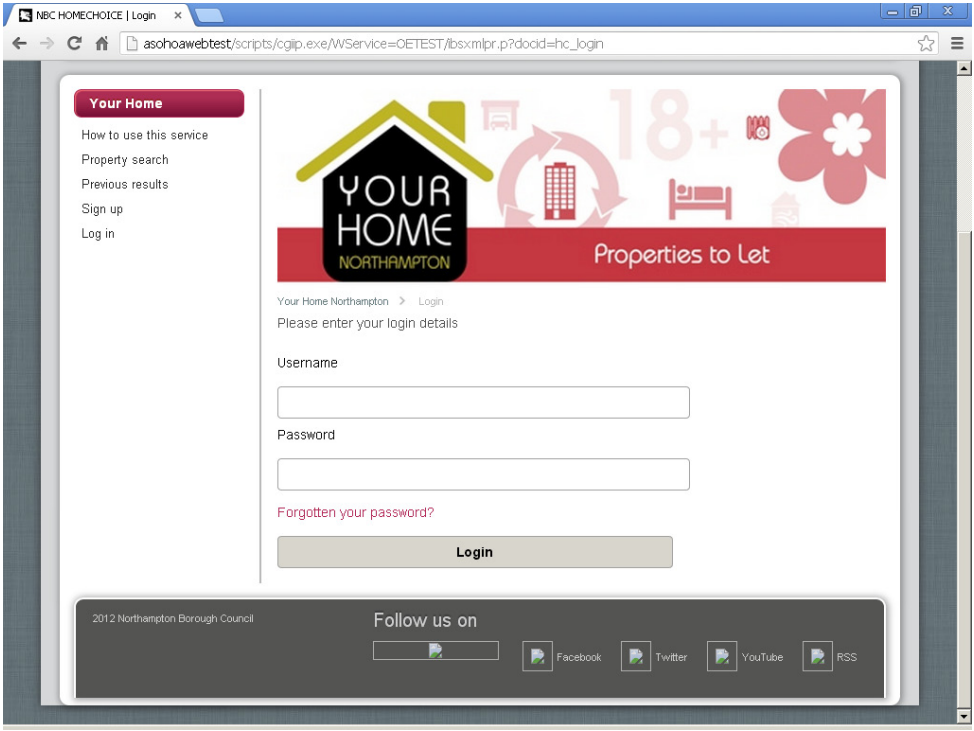
NEXT

The following page will then appear to confirm that you have now signed up:



Click on Please Click here to login and you will be taken to the Login page.

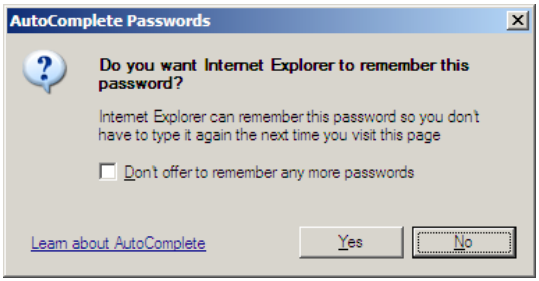
Step 2 – Logging In



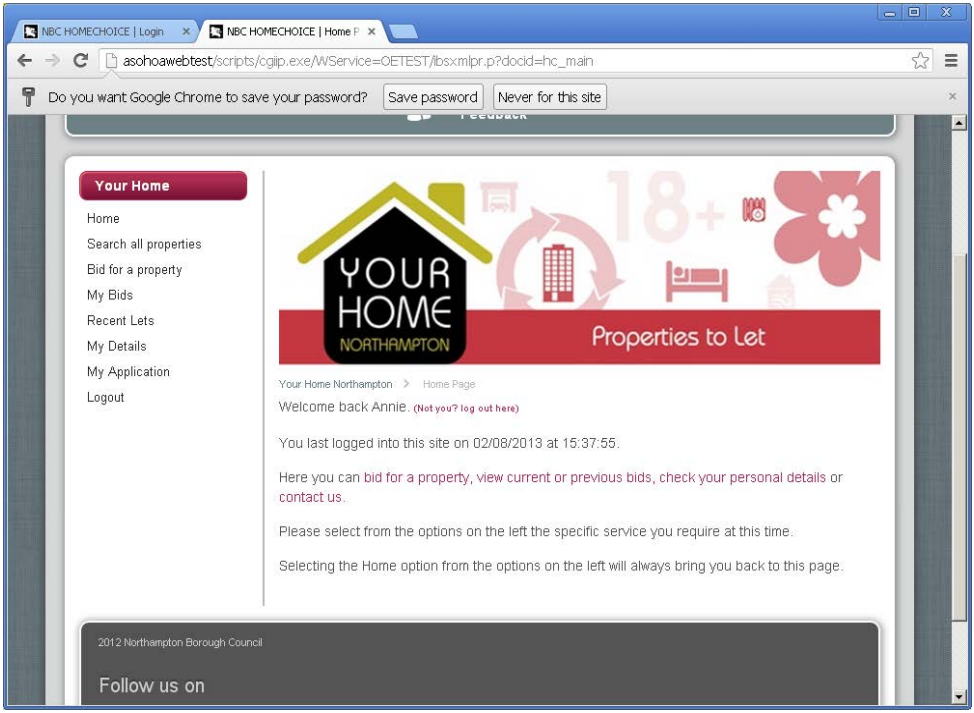
Enter your reference number and password in the relevant fields, then select

LOGIN

The following box will appear asking you whether you want Internet Explorer to remember your password. Select whichever option you prefer:


AutoComplete Passwords
Do you want Internet Explorer to remember this password?
Internet Explorer can remember this password so you don't have to type it again the next time you visit this page
Don't offer to remember any more passwords
Learn about AutoComplete
Yes
No

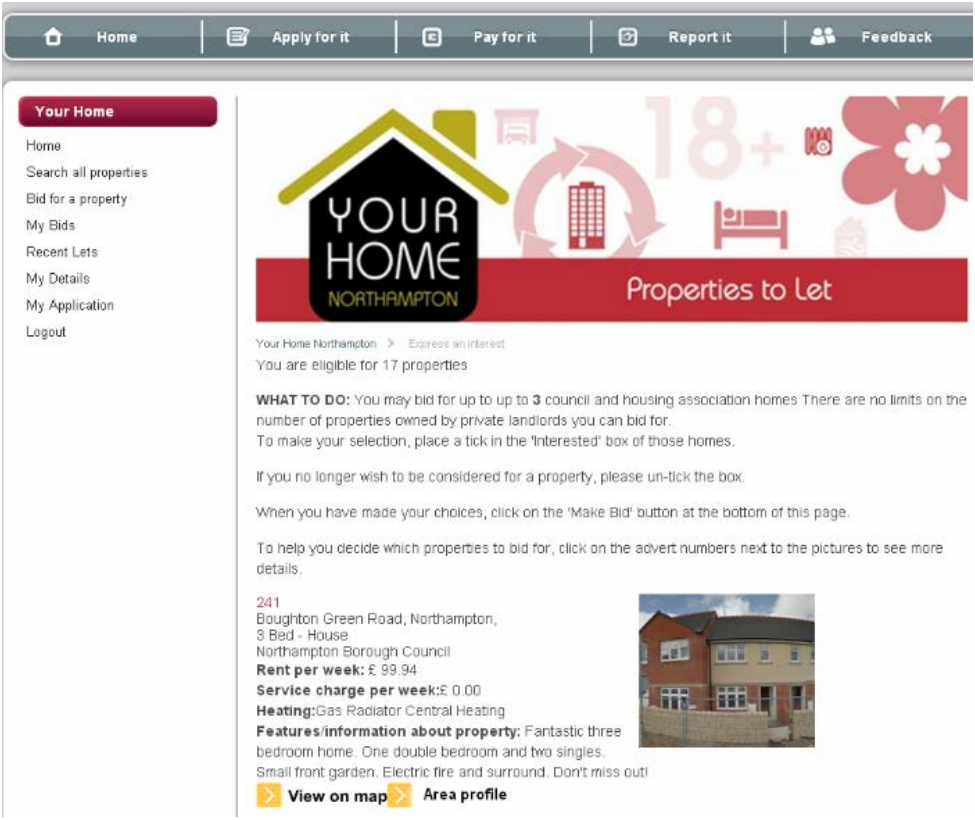
The following page will then be displayed


NBC HOMECHOICE | Login
NBC HOMECHOICE | Home P
asohoawebtest/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=OETEST/ibsxmlpr.p?docid=hc_main
Do you want Google Chrome to save your password?
Save password
Never for this site
Your Home
Home
Search all properties
Bid for a property
My Bids
Recent Lets
My Details
My Application
Logout
YOUR HOME NORTHAMPTON
Properties to Let
Your Home Northampton > Home Page
Welcome back Annie. (Not you? log out here)
You last logged into this site on 02/08/2013 at 15:37:55.
Here you can bid for a property, view current or previous bids, check your personal details or contact us.
Please select from the options on the left the specific service you require at this time.
Selecting the Home option from the options on the left will always bring you back to this page.
2012 Northampton Borough Council
Follow us on

If you have forgotten your password, click on Forgotten your password?

Step 3 – Bidding For A Property

Select Bid for a property from the menu on the left hand side of the page or click on bid for a property and you will be taken to a page that will display all of the properties that you are eligible to place bids on. You will now be able to place bids on up to 3 council or housing association properties, and any of the properties owned by a private landlord


Home
Apply for it
Pay for it
Report it
Feedback
Your Home
Home
Search all properties
Bid for a property
My Bids
Recent Lets
My Details
My Application
Logout
YOUR HOME NORTHAMPTON
Properties to Let
Your Home Northampton > Express an interest
You are eligible for 17 properties
WHAT TO DO: You may bid for up to up to 3 council and housing association homes There are no limits on the number of properties owned by private landlords you can bid for.
To make your selection, place a tick in the 'Interested' box of those homes.
If you no longer wish to be considered for a property, please un-tick the box.
When you have made your choices, click on the 'Make Bid' button at the bottom of this page.
To help you decide which properties to bid for, click on the advert numbers next to the pictures to see more details.
241
Boughton Green Road, Northampton,
3 Bed - House
Northampton Borough Council
Rent per week: £ 99.94
Service charge per week:£ 0.00
Heating:Gas Radiator Central Heating
Features/information about property: Fantastic three bedroom home. One double bedroom and two singles. Small front garden. Electric fire and surround. Don't miss out!
View on map
Area profile

Each advert will have a series of symbols advising you of the facilities that each property has.

Further information can also be obtained by clicking on the property reference number (shown as 241 in the example above) To place a bid simply place a tick in the Interested box under each property that you would like to bid on then select

MAKE BID

A page will be displayed confirming that your bids have been accepted. When you have placed bids on all of the properties that you are interested in, select Logout from the menu on the left hand side of the page or click on logout.

Making Further Bids

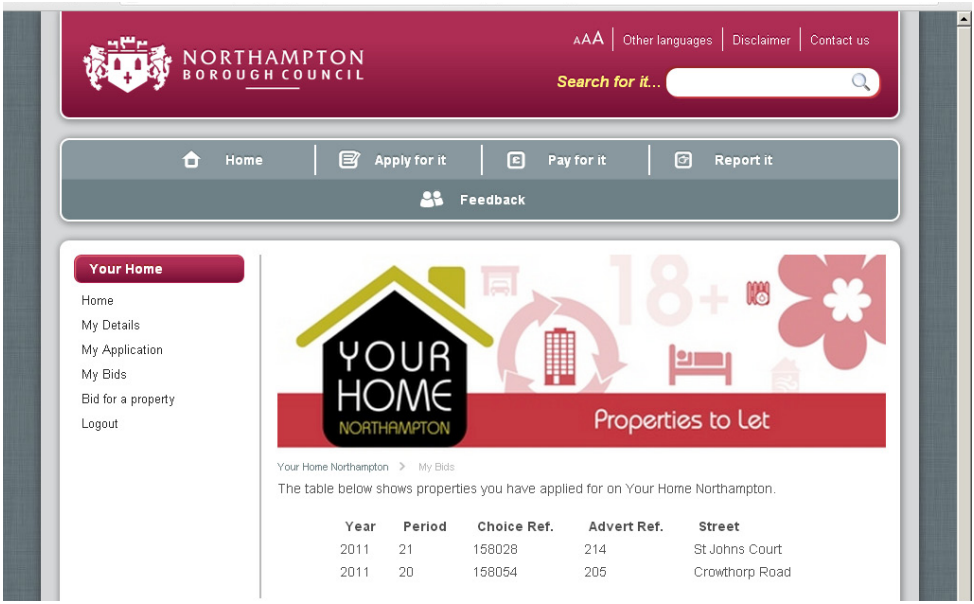
If you forget to place a bid on a property or want to change the bids that you have placed after you've selected Make Bid, click on click here to return to your bids or select Bid for a property again from the menu on the left hand side of the page. You will then be able to place a tick in the Interested box for any properties you forgot to bid on, or remove the tick from the box on any that you no longer wish to be considered for then select

MAKE BID

Simply select Logout from the menu on the left hand side of the page when you have done this.

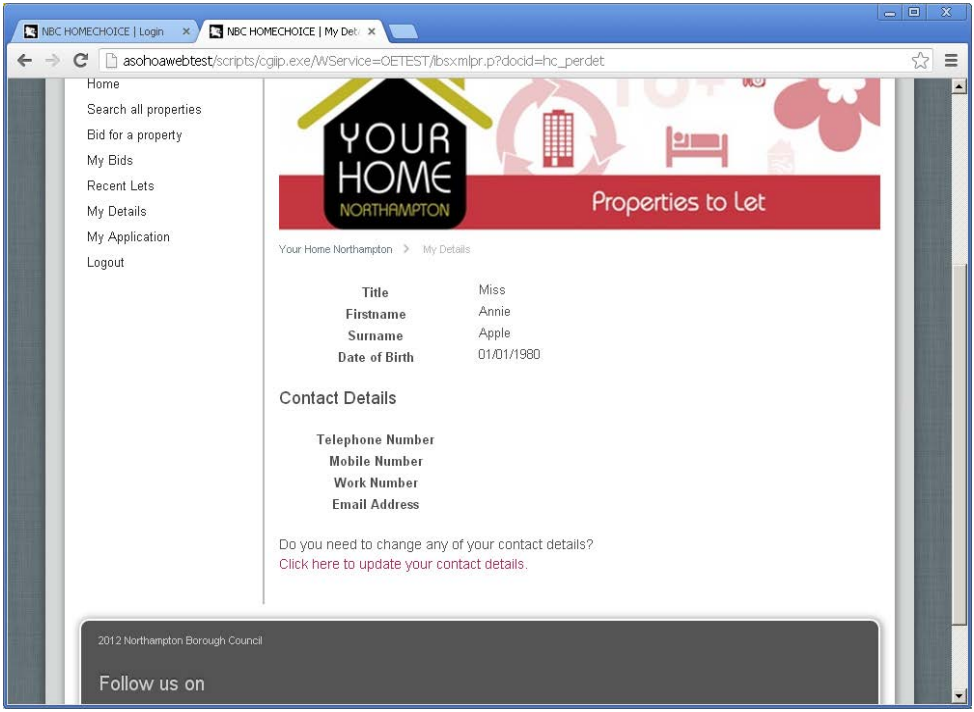
My Bids

To view a list of all properties that you have ever placed bids on in all bidding cycles, select My Bids from the menu on the left hand side of the page or click on view current or previous bids if you are on the Login page. The following page will appear and you will be able to select details of each property by clicking on the relevant line:

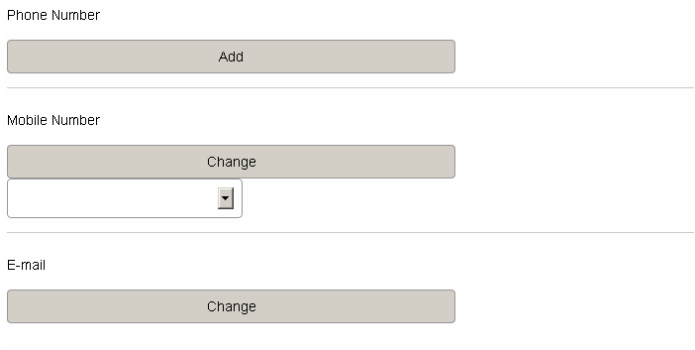


My Details

To check the contact details that we currently hold for you, select My Details from the menu on the left hand side of the page or click on check your personal details if you are on the Login page.

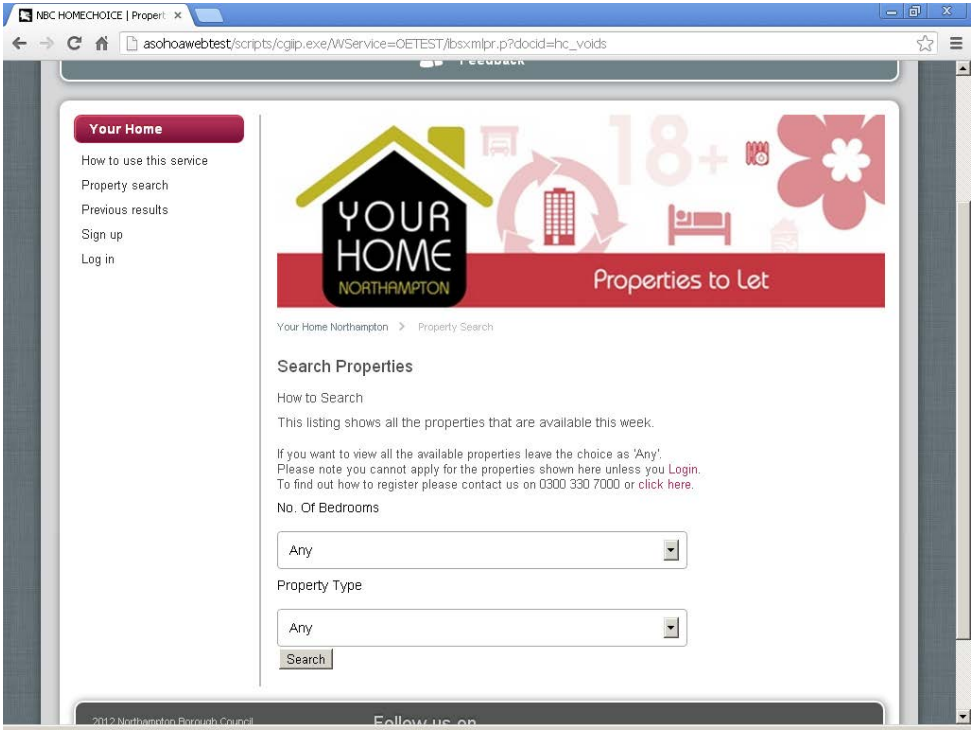


If any of the details have recently changed, click on Click here to update your contact details and complete the form that appears with the relevant information:



Searching For Properties

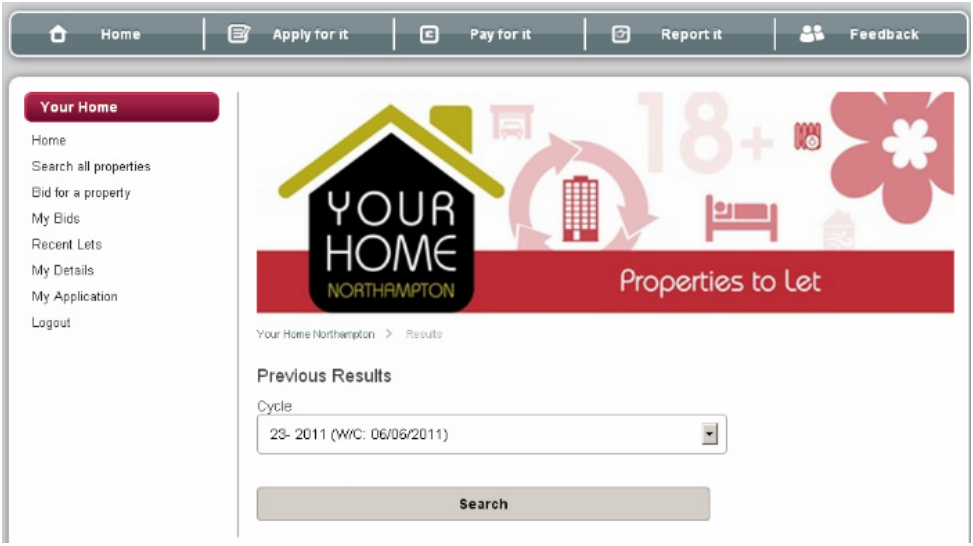
To view a list of all properties advertised in each bidding cycle, select Property Search from the menu on the left hand side of the page. The following page will be displayed:


NBC HOMECHOICE | Propert
asohoawebtest/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=OETEST/ibsxmlpr.p?docid=hc_voids
Your Home
How to use this service
Property search
Previous results
Sign up
Log in
YOUR HOME
NORTHAMPTON
Properties to Let
Your Home Northampton > Property Search
Search Properties
How to Search
This listing shows all the properties that are available this week.
If you want to view all the available properties leave the choice as 'Any'.
Please note you cannot apply for the properties shown here unless you Login.
To find out how to register please contact us on 0300 330 7000 or click here.
No. Of Bedrooms
Any
Property Type
Any
Search

All properties that are in the current bidding cycle will be displayed

Recent Lets

Details of all properties that have been let will be available to view by selecting Recent Lets from the menu on the left of the page. The following page will be displayed:



Frequently Asked Questions

What is Bidding?

Bidding is the way that you advise us which properties you are interested in. It does not mean that you will have to part with any money. Bids can be placed on the internet and free internet access is available in the One Stop Shop, Guildhall, and at all of the libraries in Northampton. You will, however, only be able to bid on properties that you are eligible for under our current Allocations policy.

What is a Bidding Cycle?

A bidding cycle is the period of time that we give you to bid on any properties that you qualify to bid on, that you are interested in. Cycles are open weekly from a minute past midnight every Wednesday until 11.59 pm the following Tuesday

Why Have I Been Suspended From Bidding?

You will not be able to bid if:

- You have not been accepted to join the housing register
- We are waiting for information from you
- You have recently completed a change of circumstances form which we need to assess
- You have been placed into the Reduced Priority Band
- An offer has been made to you

What Happens When The Bidding Cycles Close?

When each bidding cycle closes, all bids that have been received are placed into priority order for each property and offers will be made to the applicants who were accepted onto the housing register the longest. Successful applicants will be sent a letter offering them a property. If you don't receive a letter, you will need to continue placing bids in the next advertised bidding cycles.

If you are offered a council tenancy, you will be invited to attend a Tenancy and Money Advice Workshop to be given advice regarding how to manage your tenancy If you are offered a housing association tenancy you will receive a nomination letter from us to confirm this and the housing association will then contact you directly. This does not , however, guarantee that the housing association will make the offer to you.

How Many Offers Will You Make To Me?

All applicants will be made 3 reasonable offers, apart from those who have been accepted as homeless by the Housing Options Team. Homeless applicants are made one reasonable offer of accommodation. If an offer is not made to homeless applicants within the 6 bidding cycles, a direct offer of a suitable property within the borough may be made. This could be a property owned by a private landlord.

Applicants who are under-occupying their current homes will have an unlimited time period to place bids in order to find alternative accommodation. Direct offers may also be considered.

What Happens When I View A Property?

Up to 5 applicants may be invited to view a property at a time. The applicant with the highest priority will then be given the opportunity to sign for the property. If that applicant turns the property down, it will be offered to the applicant with the next highest priority. This process will be repeated until one of the applicants accepts the property.

Why Has My Offer Been Withdrawn?

Offers will be withdrawn from an applicant prior to a tenancy being signed if it is found that the offer is no longer suitable due to the following:

- We have found out that a false declaration has been made, or you have failed to provide up-to-date information
- The information advertised about the vacant property was incorrect, and it is subsequently discovered that the size and type is no longer suitable for your needs
- It is found that incorrect information has been recorded on our computer records about your application that show that your qualification and status on the housing register has altered

What Happens If I Turn Down An Offer?

If you decide that you no longer wish to be considered for a property that we have offered you, you will need to give us your reasons for turning it down in writing. If the offer was for a council property, the form to do this will be with the paperwork that we sent you when we offered you the property. If the property was for a housing association property, you will just need to tell the Officer who contacts you regarding the offer the reason why you don't want to be considered for it.

Applicants, apart from homeless applicants, who turn down, 3 reasonable offers in a 12 month period will have their application placed into the Reduced Priority Band. This will mean that you will not be able to place any further bids for 12 months. After 12 months your application will be reassessed.

If an offer is turned down by a homeless applicant but it is considered to have been suitable for the applicant's needs, the offer will be subject to a statutory review. If following the review it is decided that an offer was not suitable for the applicant, we will select a suitable property that can be offered to the applicant. This may be a property that is owned by a private landlord.

What Type Of Tenancy Will I Be Offered?

Introductory Tenancies will be offered to all new council tenants for the first 12 months of their tenancy. These types of tenancies can be extended for a further 6 months if a Notice of Extension has been served no later than 8 weeks before the tenancy would normally become a secure one. After 12 months, the tenancy may become a flexible or fixed term tenancy

Other household groups, including older people and households with a disabled person who meet the qualifying requirements of Mobility 1 or 2 on the housing register, will be offered secure or assured tenancy at the end of the introductory period, which they will be able to hold for their lifetime.

Secure Tenancies will be offered to Northampton Borough Council tenants, tenants of other authorities, or housing association tenants who are transferring and currently have secure tenancies

Fixed Term/Flexible Tenancies will be offered to the following tenants as 5 year fixed term flexible tenancies:

- families, including a single parent family
- single or two-person households

Joint Tenancies are normally granted where applicants have a long term commitment, for example married and unmarried couples, or civil partners. They will not be granted if one person is from abroad and ineligible. A single tenancy will, however, be granted to the person who is eligible.

What Will Happen If I Don't Place Bids On A Regular Basis?

We would encourage you to consider placing bids on any properties that you are eligible to bid on in all areas of the town as there is high demand for properties and it may not be possible for you to move to the areas that you like the most. If you don't place any bids for a whole year, your application will be cancelled. A letter will be sent to you to confirm that this has been done.

What Is Sheltered Housing

Sheltered housing is a range of accommodation where tenancy related support is provided to tenants over the Pension Credit age, or those who receive Disability Living Allowance or Person Independent Payment.

An assessment will be required to determine eligibility for this service. The properties are flats and bungalows and some are grouped around a community room to enable residents to enjoy social activities

All properties have an intercom system, either hardwired, lifeline, or pendant to enable residents to summon assistance in an emergency. Applicants are visited prior to being accepted for a property to ensure that sheltered housing can meet their support needs and that the appropriate level of service can be provided

How Do I Find Out Who Has Been Allocated The Properties?

The following information regarding who properties have been allocated to will be advertised on the feedback page of the website and in the newsletter each week:

- Details of how many bids were made on each property
- The size and type of properties
- The band of the applicants
- The registration date of the applicants

Who Do I Contact If I Need Assistance With Placing Bids?

For advice or assistance regarding the bidding process or regarding what your housing options are, please ring the Choice Officers on 01604 837942 or 837071. We welcome calls via the Text Relay Service. Alternatively, you may wish to email us at yourhome@northampton.gov.uk

What Do I Need To Do If My Circumstances Change?

A change in your circumstance could affect your banding. If any of the following circumstances change you will therefore need to complete a change of circumstances form:

- You change your name
- You change your address
- You want to add someone onto your application
- You want to take someone off of your application
- You are pregnant
- You have a baby
- Your medical circumstances change

For advice or assistance regarding a change in your circumstance, please call 0300 330 7000. We welcome calls via the Text Relay Service

Our Housing Association Partners

The following housing associations also advertise their properties on our website:

Accent Nene	Leicester Housing Association
Aldwyck Housing	Metropolitan Housing Assocation
Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association	Midland Heart
Derwent Living	Muir Group
East Midlands Housing Association	Nottingham Community Housing Association
Genesis Housing Association	Orbit Heart Of England
Guinness Midsummer Housing Association	Sanctuary Housing Association
Home Group	Spire Homes
Hyde Housing	Viridian Housing Association
Jephson Housing	

BLOW THE WHISTLE ON HOUSING CHEATS

When somebody with a council or housing association home rents it out without permission or obtains a home through providing false information, they are guilty of **housing fraud.** They are using up valuable housing spaces and depriving families and vulnerable people on the waiting list. **It's not fair.**

If you suspect someone of unlawfully sub-letting
call us on **01604 837320** or
email us at **reportfraud@northampton.gov.uk**
Your report will be treated in the strictest confidence and can be given anonymously.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request by contacting us on 0300 330 7000

POLISH

Informacje te moga byc dostepne w roznych jezykach i roznym formacie poprzez skontaktowanie sie z nami 0300 330 7000

RUSSIAN

Эта информация имеется по просьбе на других языках и форматах – пожалуйста обратитесь к нам по номеру 0300 330 7000

SOMALI

Macluumaadkani waaxaad ku heli kartaa luqooyin iyo habab kale haddii aad dalbato adigoo nagala soo xiriiraayo 0300 330 7000

BENGALI

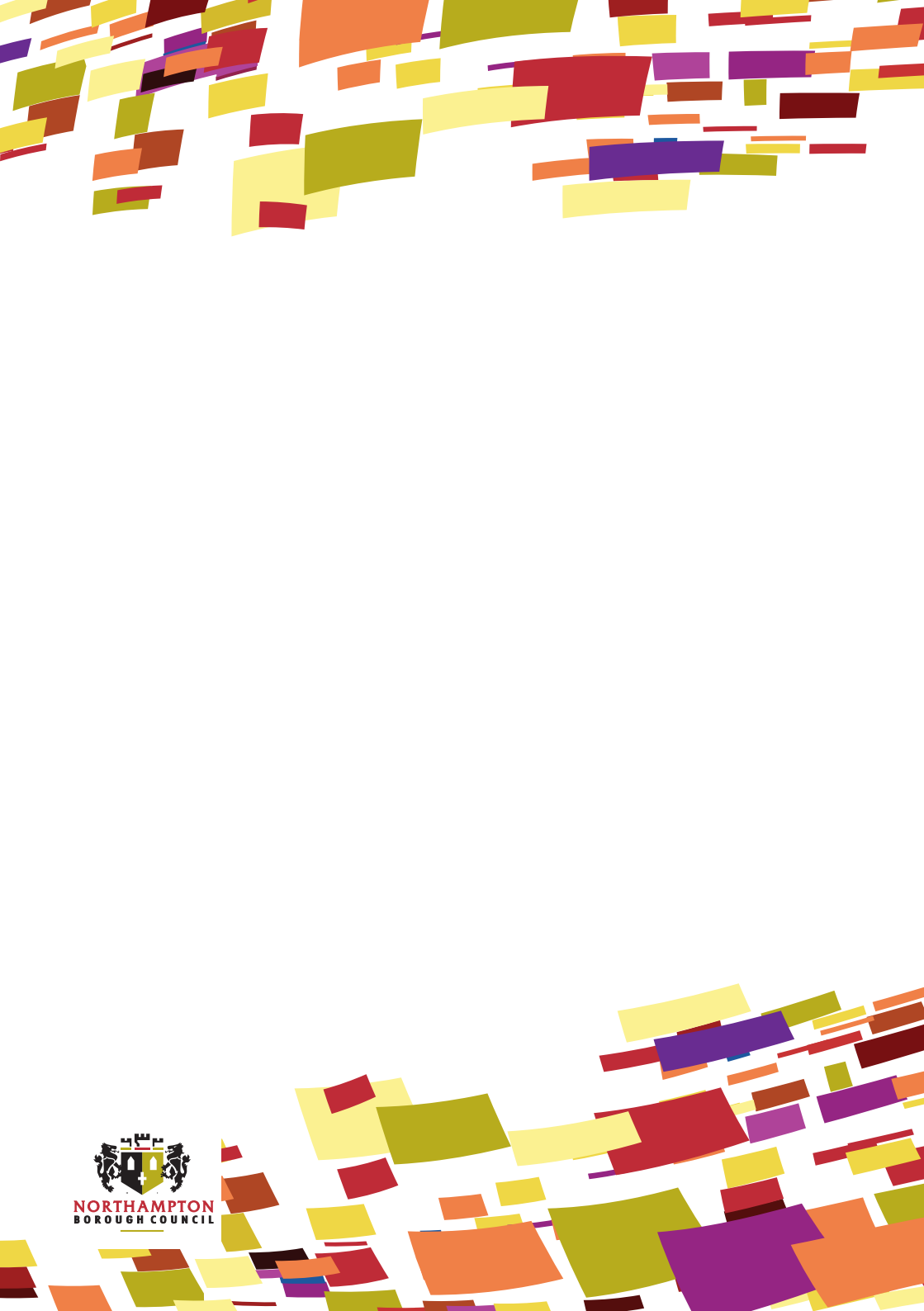
এই তথ্য অন্যান্য ভাষায় এবং পদ্ধতিতে আমাদের সাথে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করে অনুরোধ করে পাওয়া যেতে পারে 0300 330 7000

LITHUANIAN

Šitą informaciją galima gauti kitomis kalbomis ir kitais formatais, jeigu paprašysite ir paskambinsite mums: 0300 330 7000

TURKISH

Burada yer alan bilgileri Türkçe olarak ve diğer formatlarda da edinebilirsiniz. Bunun için lütfen şu numaraya telefon ederek isteğinizi bize bildiriniz: 0300 330 7000


NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL